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"He calls himself 'chief of sinners,'" said Mr. Owens; "and look what he says here," said Mr. Owens, and he turned to Acts xxvi. 10, 11—"Many of the saints did I shut up in prison . . . and I punished them often in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme."

"And why did Jesus Christ take him for an apostle if he was that wicked?" said Jen.

"Read the next verse to what we read in the Epistle to Timothy," said Mr. Owens; and he handed the book to Jen (and a Douay Bible it was). So Jen read—"And for this cause have I obtained mercy; that in me first Christ Jesus might show forth all patience, for the information of them that shall believe in him until life everlasting."

"Well," said Pat, "that's good, for there's a pattern that he will save sinners."

"Listen to this," said Mr. Owens, and he read from the Gospel of St. John iii. 16, the words of Christ himself—"God so loved the world, as to give his only begotten son; that whosoever believeth in him, may not perish, but may have life everlasting." And then Mr. Owens went on—"Does not this show you that whatever is wanting to bring you to life everlasting, Jesus Christ is willing to do for you?"

"It does, your reverence, and I'd like to know, what he will do," said Pat.

"If you believe and trust in him," said Mr. Owens, "he will stand up for you at the great day, and say—'I have taken this man's sins upon myself, I have paid for all his sins; and his soul is mine, that I may save it for ever, and won't that do?'" said Mr. Owens.

"That's just what I want, your reverence, to make me happy," said Pat.

"Well," said Mr. Owens, "you have read your Bible to some purpose, to see that you want a Saviour; now read your Bible again, to see what that Saviour did for you, and you will find comfort for your soul."

So Pat went home with a hopeful mind that night, and we hope to hear more of his reading yet.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

All letters to be addressed to the Editor, 9, Upper Sackville-st.

No anonymous letter can be attended to. Whatever is sent for insertion must be authenticated by the name and address of the writer, not necessarily for publication, but as a guarantee for his good faith.

We would request our valued correspondents, both Roman Catholics and Protestants, to limit the length of their communications, and not to discuss a variety of distinct topics in one letter.

Contributors of £1 per annum will be furnished with six copies, any of which will be forwarded, as directed, to nominees of the subscriber. Any one receiving any number of the journal which has not been paid for or ordered by himself, will not be charged for it, and may assume that it has been paid for by a subscriber.

The Catholic Layman.

DUBLIN, JULY, 1853.

WE feel it to be our bounden duty, from time to time, to give our readers satisfactory proof that they do right in reading our paper.

Our paper is an appeal to our fellow countrymen to consider, calmly and seriously, the questions which concern their souls and ours. Thousands have responded to our call, and do read our paper; and many Roman Catholics, as well as Protestants, do promote our object, by their contributions to our pages.

We do not wish that they should read our discussions with an uneasy mind, uncertain whether they are doing right or not. We know that many are warned against reading the CATHOLIC LAYMAN, as if the very act of doing so were a sin. The warning rests upon such arguments as this—that they who have the truth, should never condescend to argue or discuss with those that have not; that it is like putting truth and falsehood on a level; that discussion always leads to error and not to truth, and therefore that Catholics should never argue or discuss religious matters with heretics.

There is another argument sometimes urged against discussion—that it excites angry and uncharitable feelings and passions. We are no way afraid of this charge been made against us; we leave it to our readers to say whether

we are liable to it. But the arguments above mentioned may cause some to read us with an uneasy conscience, and it is for them we now write.

They are not only told that Catholics should avoid all discussion with heretics, but they see this example now everywhere set by Roman Catholic priests. This was not always so; in our own day there have been "discussions," "Pope and Maguire," "the Downpatrick discussion," "Gregg and Maguire," and many others besides. But latterly the priests have shrunk from all discussion. It is not for want of being invited; their ablest men are now everywhere invited to discussion by the clergy of the Church of England and Ireland. Their travelling missionaries, LOCKHART and RINOLFI, Dr. CAHILL, Dr. MARSHALL, and various others, have been repeatedly invited to discussion of late, and everywhere they decline. It is clear that they are resolved not to venture into discussion again; and there seems to be much reason to think that the Pope and the Bishops have forbidden them to do so; and it is since they have adopted this new plan that we hear all the arguments to prove that it is wrong for "Catholics" to enter into any discussion with those whom they think in error.

Now, we think, two things are plain from this—1st, That they feel that discussion of their reasons and ours, will injure their cause, and advance ours; for, if they thought that discussion would serve their cause and injure ours, they would, no doubt, come forward to discuss with us. 2nd, Their reasons are only invented to serve a purpose, since, up to a few years ago, they never thought it wrong to enter into discussion.

Our object now is to show our readers that discussion and examination of the reasons on both sides, was never thought wrong by Catholics in ancient times, while the Church held fast to the faith contained in the Scriptures; but that, on the contrary, it was always the true Catholics who invited discussion and sought for it, and it was always those who were engaged in upholding error that cried out against discussion, and that said that they who had the truth should not discuss with those who had it not.

We have a striking instance in the conduct of one of the greatest, and best, and wisest of the Fathers (perhaps the greatest of them all), St. AUGUSTINE, in which he was joined by no less than 266 bishops of the Church of Africa.

No case could better serve to illustrate our discussions now; for the question in Africa then was, as it now is with us—"Which is the true Church?" Is it not interesting to us now to see how the Catholic Church in Africa, under the guidance of St. AUGUSTINE, dealt with such a question nearly 1,500 years ago? Is it not interesting to see whether Catholics then thought it right to discuss such a question with those who differed from them, and to see how they discussed it?

The facts were these: DONATUS had got himself ordained Bishop of Carthage, where CECILIAN was Bishop already, under pretence that CECILIAN had fallen off from the Catholic Church. Hence arose two rival communions, which soon spread over all Africa. In the province of Numidia the Donatists became more numerous than the Catholics.

The Donatists boasted that they only were the Church; they only had Bishops; they only had the truth. The Catholics made no such claim. They acknowledged the Donatists as brethren, though erring.

The Donatists scorned to discuss the question, "which was the true Church," with those whom they did not acknowledge to be a Church at all, just as the Roman Catholic priests in Ireland do now. The true Catholics continually invited the Donatists to discussion, and at last succeeded in forcing them to it.

We possess a report of the proceedings at this discussion. We quote it from the valuable collection of councils made by two French Jesuits, Labbé and Cossart, vol. ii., p. 1336, &c. Ed. Paris, 1672.

About 266 Catholic Bishops were engaged in it, and perhaps nearly as many Donatist Bishops. Fourteen managers were appointed on each side, St. AUGUSTINE being one of the fourteen for the Catholics.

The Donatists, when at last compelled, by the Emperor's order, to attend, did everything to make delay and difficulty, and to evade discussion. They said (cap. 4, p. 1419), that "they were forbidden by the divine law to sit down in the same place with their opponents;" while the Catholics were willing to sit down with them.

MARCELLINUS, the tribune and notary, who conducted the proceedings, proposed that each party should sign their name to a report of what they said, so that they might not be able to deny it afterwards (c. 13). St. AUGUSTINE answered that his party had already bound themselves in writing to do so (c. 14). The Donatists refused to do so (c. 16). We have seen such things at discussions in Ireland.

When the Donatists were driven to say something for themselves, it consisted wholly of bold and confident assertions, for which they gave no proof; such as this—, *We say that we are Bishops of the truth of our Lord Christ (c. 10).* To which the Catholics replied, "there is need to prove that they are Bishops of the truth, and not to boast of it" (c. 11).

The Catholics were equally anxious to avoid all excuses for delay. Thus, when the Donatists objected to their opponents assuming to themselves the name of Catholic, saying that the right to that name was in dispute between them, St. AUGUSTINE avoids using that word in the discussion, saying—"they object to the Catholic Church, or—that I may speak without controversy—the Church which we hold" (c. 226). Would any Roman Catholic priest go this far now to promote discussion?

We might illustrate our Irish controversies, in a variety of particulars, from this most interesting discussion at Carthage, but we must be brief. The following speech of St. AUGUSTINE shows the whole state of the case, and allows us to proceed to the great question, and how he dealt with it:—

"It was to the Catholic Bishops (*i.e.*, at their request) that the holding of this discussion was granted. The Emperor's decree proves this. We have both come; here we are; and God has commanded us to be disputers and discussers rather than goers to law; and the Emperor, who fears and serves God, wishes for nothing else. Let nothing be introduced which is not necessary to the business. . . . How long shall this so great expectation of the people be kept in suspense? All are thinking about their souls; and we are hitherto creating delays, that we should never come to the end of knowing the truth!"—c. 21.

But the manner in which St. AUGUSTINE and the Catholics dealt with the question itself is worthy of notice above all. From first to last they maintained and asserted, over and over again, that the question—"Which is the true Church?"—was to be settled by the Scriptures alone.

Thus FORTUNATIANUS, one of the Catholic managers, says to the Donatists:—"WE show the Catholic Church from the law (Moses), the prophets, the evangelists, the Psalms, and all the divine writings. . . . We bring forward the Gospel to show the Church with you."

And St. AUGUSTINE himself (c. 101)—"We hold that Church which we find in those Scriptures, in which we also have learned CHRIST. Forasmuch as our Scriptures, to the authority of

which both parties are subject, commend to us CHRIST and his Church as a holy marriage—CHRIST the bridegroom, she the bride; where we learn of Him, there also we should find her. If, therefore, we have now arisen, and consider to what communion of Christians in Africa we should be joined, beyond all doubt, we should hold to that which we find in the Scriptures." And again (c. 187)—"If, therefore, it be inquired concerning the Church—What it is? How great it is? What sort it is? the Divine Scriptures alone are sufficient to point her out."

It is equally remarkable that St. AUGUSTINE nowhere appeals to Rome or to the Bishop of Rome, to decide which was the true Church. No such notion appears in this discussion. But when the Donatists wanted to make out that CECILIAN was the father and head of the Catholics in Africa, St. AUGUSTINE, instead of saying (as some would now say) that the Pope was the head of their Church, answers thus: "We call those fathers, for the sake of honour, who have gone before us either in time or merit. It is otherwise when we come to inquire whom we have as father in respect of the faith; whom we have as father in respect of life everlasting; whom we have as father in respect of holding to the Church, and possessing the promises of God." To all this he answers, "I have a Head, but He is CHRIST."

It seems St. AUGUSTINE knew nothing of "CHRIST's Vicar upon earth."

What St. AUGUSTINE thought of the necessity of obedience to the Pope, we will show some other time. We conclude here with the testimony of another great Catholic Bishop, OPTATUS, of Milevis, who worked with St. AUGUSTINE against these same Donatists:—"No tribunal can be found on earth concerning this question; a judge must be sought from heaven. But why need we reach to heaven, when we have his testament here in the Gospel?—(De Schis. Don., l. v., c. 3.)

Our readers may wish to know, what was the result of this famous discussion. Orders were given that this discussion should be read in all the Churches every year; and, in a short time, it came to pass, that the Donatist Church dwindled away to nothing, and there was again but one Church in Africa.

If Roman Catholic priests dare not now follow St. AUGUSTINE's example in discussion, if they cannot hope to produce the same results, it is principally because they cannot use the same means—they cannot prove their Church out of the Scriptures alone.

We trust we have now done something to satisfy our readers that discussion is right, and to show them also on what principles it should proceed; and we simply ask, can they wish for a greater authority than St. AUGUSTINE?

ON THE INTERNAL EVIDENCES OF THE CATHOLIC RELIGION.

IN returning to the consideration of Mr. M'Manus's letter, we desire to repeat, in the first instance, our deep conviction that any religion which does not claim to be the religion of the heart—which does not apply the strongest and highest motives to move the affections of the heart—can have little claim to be from God (for "God is love"—1 John iv. 8), and little deserves to find acceptance among men.

We also desire to repeat our conviction that a religion can possess no stronger internal evidence than its suitability to the wants of fallen man; while, each day, reflection makes us feel more strongly that the fact of a religion meeting all the wishes of our fallen nature should make us very suspicious of the snares of Satan, who first planted those wishes in our breasts, and whose best weapon against us is still to make false promises of supplying them all.

Our business now, in reference to Mr. M'Manus's letter, is to enquire, 1st, which the Church of England or of Rome sets before men the highest motives to move the deepest affections of the heart of man; 2nd, which proposes the religion most suited to supply his real wants; 3rd, which, in clearest of the charge of conciliating the wishes of a fallen nature, by making offers and provisions which God has not made.

Mr. M'Manus has compared the two churches, in reference to the first and second of these points; and it is necessary that we should follow him in this: we trust that he will think that we only complete the subject of his letter in adding the third.

With respect to the first question: "which religion sets before men the highest motives to move the deepest affection of the heart?" we ask Mr. M'Manus to consider, in the first place, that the two churches agree in some things, and differ in others. Now, if the things in which the two churches do agree, be, indeed, the highest motives to work upon the deepest affections of man's heart, then, the only question is, which church puts these things forward most prominently—which church gives them the chief place—which is most careful that all should know them—which is most careful that nothing else should supplant those things in the hearts and affections of men? But, if the things which the Church of Rome holds, and which the Church of England rejects, be, indeed, the things which Mr. M'Manus thinks are those which apply the highest motives to move men's love to God, then we must enquire, whether these things be, indeed, from God? for, if not, Mr. M'Manus must be mistaken; for we expect he will admit, frankly, that those things which are revealed by God to lead our hearts and draw our love to him, must be fitter for that purpose (whether we at present see it or not) than any inventions which men have made for moving our affections. The waters of Jordan were really better than the rivers of Abana and Parphar for cleansing the leprosy of Naaman, whether he saw the reason or not; and though he saw not this reason at first, yet, doubtless, he saw it afterwards; and we see now that the choice of Jordan was really suited to direct his heart aright to God, for it pointed to the God of Israel. (See 2 Kings v.—4th Kings, Douay Bible.)

How, then, stands the case between the churches—in what do they agree—in what do they differ?

In what do they agree? We must be very brief—but the greatest and noblest things bear brevity best—it is enough to say what they are.

Hear the words of our Blessed Saviour's own appeal to men to draw their hearts by love to God, through him:—"For God so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him may not perish, but may have life everlasting."—(1 John iii. 16.)

Is this no appeal to "the heart of a poor penitent, gushing with feelings of sorrow and contrition, and groaning under the burden of sin?" Can it do nothing to move our hearts with love towards God? Let St. John, "that disciple whom Jesus loved" (John xxi. 20), and who was himself in consequence, in an especial manner, "the Apostle of love," answer this question—"Let us, therefore, love God, because God first hath loved us."—(1 John iv. 19.)

Does Mr. M'Manus see no force in this appeal to the best affections of a soul groaning under the burden of sin? or will he say that this is a mere "dry and barren abstraction of a deity." We ask him to consider who brings this message of love and grace from God to man: it is the man Jesus Christ; himself perfect man, as well as perfect God. "In all things made like unto his brethren, that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest before God, that he might bear a propitiation for the sins of the people; for in that wherein he himself hath suffered and been tempted, he is able to succour them also that are tempted."

It is not easy nor possible to express the comfort that God's children feel in every trial, in looking to a Saviour who has felt every trial, bodily and spiritual, that they can feel (though always without sin), and for this reason, that they might look to him as one who can feel for them. Such a Saviour is to them no "dry and barren abstraction of a deity;" he brings the very essence of the Godhead himself within the reach and comprehension of their love.

In this great object, and these effectual motives of love towards God, both churches professedly agree. We have quoted from the Roman Catholic Bible, which suits our purposes here as well as the authorized version of the Church of Rome.

Our heaviest complaint against Rome is this: that professing to believe such things as these, she does not rely simply on them to move men's love to God; but, treating them with cold neglect, she multiplies all other means, of human invention, of moving the affections of men.

How does Mr. M'Manus judge of these things? The two churches agree in these things: yet Mr. M'Manus condemns the one, notwithstanding that her great and chief object is to hold up Christ the Saviour as the true object of the love and adoration of men. He extols the other, not because she proposes such objects and motives of love, but because she has "a sublime ritual—fasts and penances—intercessory offerings for departed souls—saints and intercessors interceding in the presence of God—devotions to the Virgin Mother of God," all of which, he says, are but so many links of the chain whereby the faith which he professes is entwined around the deepest principles of our nature.

Did the blessed Apostles know how to preach that faith; or how to move men's hearts with love to God? And was it upon these things that they relied? In all the accounts that Scripture gives of their earnest preaching (that preaching which converted the world)—in all their earnest and affectionate letters to their converts, we find no mention of these things. Mr. M'Manus, himself, admits in his letter—"it must be confessed that you have proved how

little evidence is to be derived from the ancient fathers in support of the reverence which the Catholic Church has always paid to the Blessed Virgin, and other important doctrines which we are taught to believe." And yet he makes these things (which must be, by this admission, mere inventions of men in later times) the test of the religion of the heart, to the utter forgetting of the grace and mercy which God has revealed to us through Jesus Christ our Saviour! He still suffers from the practical teaching of the Church of Rome. She has laboured to keep these human inventions ever before his eyes—she has coldly neglected to set Christ, his nature, his office, his character, and his grace and mercy before him; and he does not yet see how wonderfully suited the Saviour is, as shewn to us in Scripture, to draw to himself every affection of the hearts of sinners oppressed with the sense of sin.

But, why did he not bring forward more "links of the chain" by which his faith is "entwined around the deepest principles of our nature." Why did he not bring forward the scapular and all the lying stories connected with it, so sedulously used to touch the hearts of the Irish peasantry—why did he not bring forward the holy coat of Treves, the winking picture of Rimini, the fanatical delusions of the "Adolorata" and Estatica, by which the Church of Rome imposed on the heart of the late Earl of Shrewsbury? Why not mention the countless succession of lying wonders which the Church of Rome, in all latter ages, has produced or countenanced—why not all the legends of the Breviary, which the Roman priests are bound to study? Why, in fine, has he not said that the Church of Rome, in our own day, is continually producing a succession of such lying wonders, to touch the hearts of her children, whenever she sees their zeal to flag (as in the Rimini pictures, and other cases above mentioned)?

Are not these things the strongest evidence that she has not the religion of the heart to rely on—that she feels the necessity of a constant production of the inventions of men, to keep up anything like popular devotion? Seriously, we ask Mr. M'Manus if all this be preferable to fixing all our hearts and hopes upon the life and death of Christ for us?

Mr. M'Manus speaks of the sincere and pious men in his communion who have felt the internal conviction of its truth. What we have said of the great things in which the Church of Rome professes to agree with us, may leave us room to hope that some in that Church do find what satisfies their hearts, in spite of the coldness of their Church about it. But the question is, do they find this in what the Churches agree in, or in the things which Mr. M'Manus thinks so important and which we reject? We thank Mr. M'Manus for his instances: he produces Fenelon and Pascal—the latter is, perhaps, the recluse of Port Royal, the disciple of St. Cyran; a member of a community which all zealous Roman Catholics at this day are agreed in calling heretics, because they rejected the decrees of Popes, and neglected the inventions of their Church, to fix all their thoughts upon Christ and his grace as they found them in the Bible; and sore and long their persecutions were at the hands of Rome for this their choice. Fenelon, also, was a man of like spirit, and suffered for it too. Why does Mr. M'Manus take his instances of genuine love to God in members of his Church, from among those who came nearest to us—who thought the least of the things he boasts of, and who dwelt the most on the great things we hold? Is it not a plain confession that these are, indeed, the things that can fill our hearts with love, and make our profiting appear to all?

Mr. M'Manus has much to learn, if he really believes what he says, of what the Church of England and Ireland offers to meet the intense cravings of a soul burdened with a sense of sin—"You tell him that penances are unavailing" (and so they are, indeed, to atone for sin)—"that priestly absolution is but an empty sound" (we tell him that the ministers of the Church are God's ambassadors, and that to them the ministry of reconciliation is committed. 2 Cor. v. 18, 19, 20.) "You forbid him to turn his thoughts to the sainted martyrs and confessors" (nay, rather we point to that "so great a cloud of witnesses" to make him "look to Jesus" as they also looked. Hebrews xii. 12.) "You think it rank idolatry to fly for refuge to the Blessed Mother of God (we do; for Christ himself is the refuge set before us). "And what do you offer him instead? You give him the Thirty-nine Articles! You set before his mind a dry and barren abstraction of a deity, enveloped in a cloudy maze of dogmatic theology." So Mr. M'Manus asks and answers. Nay, nay, it is not so; we call God to witness. The Church of Rome, indeed, propounds Pope Pius's Creed to any restless soul that seeks for peace in her communion; and refuses any hope of comfort till the poor wanderer swallows every article, with all that is in it, and all that is not in it. But not so we. We highly prize the Thirty-nine Articles for their own purpose; but we do not offer that formulary to a convert, much less to one seeking the cleansing of his soul from sin. We show him Christ, as Christ showed himself on earth: we show him the man Christ Jesus, meek and lowly, dwelling among men; sharing all their sorrows, healing all their infirmities, bearing with all their contradictions, and giving himself to die for their sins. We show his gracious words, "come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest."—Matt. xi. 28. We shew his sacred promise, "Him that cometh to me I will not cast out."—John vi. 37. We point to Christ as still the same, yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.—Hebrews xiii.